

Appl. No. : 09/470,377
Filed : December 22, 1999

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which is provided separately from said display device and which is for selecting the function items by touch operation, wherein a touch-operation guide shape is provided with convex or concave ribs on a touch-operation face of said touch panel, wherein an image representing the touch-operation guide shape formed with the ribs is displayed on said display device, wherein the operation function items are superposed on said image.

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 20 have been amended to clarify the invention without substantially changes. The amendment raises the issue of neither new matter nor new issue. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE." Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 2, 8-11, 16-18 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yoshimasa et al (EP 0 884 691 A2). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Claims 1 and 20 have been amended to clarify the invention. Claims 2, 8-11 and 16-18 are dependent ultimately on Claim 1.

In the Response to Arguments of the final Office Action, the Examiner asserts that applicant argues limitations that are not in the claims as far as an image of the protruding brackets is displayed on the monitor. In light of the Examiner's remarks, Claims 1 and 20 have been amended to clarify that the device displays (i) an image representing the touch-operation guide shape formed with the convex or concave ribs formed on the touch panel, and (ii) operation function items superposed on the image.

In contrast, Yoshimasa's device simply shows items but does not show a touch-operation guide shape (with ribs) of a touch panel, on which the items are interposed. The distinct features (i) and (ii) are important to easy and accurate operation without actually looking at the input device. Thus, Claims 1 and 20 as amended herein could not be anticipated by Yoshimasa. The remaining claims are dependent ultimately on Claim 1 and also could not be anticipated by Yoshimasa. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

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Claims 3-7, 12-14 and 21 are allowed.

CONCLUSION

In light of the Applicant's amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.


Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: April 22, 2003

By:


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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1 and 20 have been amended as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A touch-operating input device comprising a display device for displaying operation function items and a touch panel which is provided separately from the display device and which is for selecting the function items by touch operation, wherein a touch-operation guide shape is formed with convex or concave ribs on the touch-operation face of said touch panel, said touch-operating device further comprising control means for controlling said display device to display an image representing the touch-operation guide shape formed with the ribs, the image being overlapped with wherein the operation function items are superposed on said image.

20. (Twice Amended) A touch-operation assisting method for a touch-operating input device comprising a display device for displaying operation function items and a touch panel which is provided separately from said display device and which is for selecting the function items by touch operation, wherein a touch-operation guide shape is provided with convex or concave ribs on a touch-operation face of said touch panel, wherein an image representing the touch-operation ~~face~~ guide shape formed with the ribs is displayed on said display device, ~~the image being overlapped with~~ wherein the operation function items are superposed on said image.